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State Senate committee calls for federal government to build Rare Isotope Accelerator at Michigan State University

Lansing – The Michigan Senate Economic Development, Small Business and Regulatory Reform Committee approved a resolution today calling on the federal government to build a proposed Rare Isotope Accelerator at Michigan State University after hearing testimony on the benefits.

The accelerator is the next-generation facility for conducting basic nuclear science research into the foundations of the physical world. In addition to advancing science, rare isotope research has led to dramatic advancements in medicine, national security and detection technologies. Rare isotope research is the very heart of current, leading-edge medical imaging technologies.

“The prospect of bringing this facility to Michigan is tremendously exciting,” said Committee Chairman Alan Sanborn, R-Richmond. “From a scientific standpoint, it would be an incredible research and educational opportunity for MSU. It also would bring a billion dollars worth of construction jobs to the state, almost \$2 billion in federal money over 20 years, and the potential for private, high-tech firms to locate here to be close to the facility and its staff.”

Nuclear scientists at MSU are recognized worldwide as leaders in their field, making MSU an ideal location for the RIA. MSU is one of the premier educators for a nuclear science Ph.D. in the United States. It also is home to the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory – the top rare isotope research facility in the nation.

(More)

According to Sanborn, the Senate Resolution memorializes Congress and the U.S. Department of Energy to give favorable consideration to the MSU proposal to locate the facility on their campus.

Those testifying today on the value of the RIA to Michigan included Peter McPherson, president of Michigan State University; Konrad Gelbke, director of the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory at MSU; Mark Gaffney, president of the Michigan AFL-CIO; and Jim Barrett, president of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

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Editor's note: For background on the NSCL and the Rare Isotope Accelerator, visit www.nscl.msu.edu. For the most recent news on RIA, see: <http://msutoday.msu.edu/research/index.php3?article=13Feb2004-8> and <http://msutoday.msu.edu/search/index.php3?q=RIA>.